

## NIGHT AND MORNING.

"Was it a lie they told me,  
Was it a pitiless hoax?  
A sop for my soul and its longing,  
Only to cozen and coax?  
And a voice came down through the night  
and rain:  
"They lied; thou hast trusted in vain."

Must I vanish off hand into darkness,  
Blown out with a breath like a lamp?  
Have I nought in the future to look to  
Save rotting in darkness and damp?  
And the answer came with a mocking hiss:  
"Thou hast nothing to look to save this."

What of the grave and its conquest,  
Of death and the loss of its sting?  
Was it only the brag of a madman  
Who believed an impossible thing?  
And the voice returned as the voice of a  
ghost—  
"It was but a madman's boast."

Am I the serf of my senses,  
Is my soul a slave without rights?  
Are feeding and breeding and sleeping  
My first and truest delights?  
And the cruel answer cut me afresh:  
"Thou art but the serf of thy flesh."

Is it all for nought then I travail,  
That I long for leisure from sin?  
That I thirst for the pure and the perfect,  
And feel like a god within?  
The voice replied to my passionate  
thought:  
"Thy longing and travail is nought."

Then I bowed my head in my anguish,  
Folding my face in my hands,  
And I shuddered as one that sinketh  
In the clutch of quaking sands,  
And I stared, as I clenched my fingers  
tight,  
Out through the blank black night.

For life was shorn of its meaning,  
And I cried: Oh, God! is it so?  
Utter the truth though it slay me,  
Utter it, yes, or no!  
But I heard no answer to heal my pain,  
Save the bluster of wind and rain.

And behold as I sat in my sorrow,  
A quick ray shot from the East,  
Another and then another,  
And the dark clouds rolled away to the  
West  
As the great sun rose from his rest.

And now, as the fair dawn broadened  
Strong and joyous and bright,  
My whole soul swept to meet it,  
Rapt with a deep delight:  
And a new voice rang down the radiant  
skies:  
"Rejoice, I have heard thee: arise!"  
—From Good Words.

## IN THE ABBOT'S SEAT.

Looking the very impersonation of  
contented idleness, Frank Carew lay on  
the hillside above the ruined abbey of  
Furness, and pondered the embodiment  
in canvass and pigments of the fancies  
with which the June sunset had in-  
spired him. For three of the brightest  
of Summer weeks the young A. R. A.  
had occupied himself in multiplying  
sketches of the abbey ruins, until scarce-  
ly a feature of their beautiful decay but  
was lodged in his portfolio. The chap-  
el was there, roofless, windowless, its  
alter gone, grass grasping closely the  
few gravestones that remained; but as  
majestic in its desolation as ever it had  
looked in those days of Catholic pros-  
perity when the Cistercian monks of  
Furness chanted prayers for the souls  
parted from that dust over which their  
feet were treading.

Carew lay dreamingly under his fa-  
vorite tree looking down on the gray  
stillness of the abbey, and trying to give  
substance to the shadowy fancies that  
connected themselves in his mind with  
the cawing of the black choristers op-  
posite. At length he started up with  
an exclamation:

"I have it—I have it. Time, mid-  
night; the moon at its brightest; the  
ghost of old King Harry just stealing  
into the chapel, and a crowd of rooks  
perched on the sedilia, and cawing  
curses on the robber who left the cen-  
tral niche of the three seats empty of  
an abbot. 'King Harry the Eighth Vis-  
iting the Abbey of Furness.' If my  
right hand remembers its cunning, I'll  
hold my own in the academy next May."

A downward scramble among trees,  
bushes, and bits of masonry, and Carew  
crossed the arch into the ruins. A light  
laugh struck upon his ear.

He sprang up the wall and looked to-  
ward the sedilia. Apparently the scene  
actually revealed was more satisfactory  
than that for which the laugh had pre-  
pared him, for he at once leaped down  
into the chapel and walked toward the  
stone steps to his left.

A figure, in no way ghostly, had al-  
ready risen from the central niche of  
the three worn recesses that still adorn  
the ruined chapel of Furness; and, with  
great brown eyes bent shyly on the in-  
truder, seemed doubtful whether to re-  
main or not. This successor to the ab-  
bots of old days, wore as unpretending-  
ly tasteful a dress as an English girl of  
eighteen summers could figure in, and  
had a face of the order that one hesi-  
tates whether to call plain or handsome,  
and ends by pronouncing signally at-  
tractive. A Madonna done in marble  
might have had those titless cheeks  
and that look of seriousness.

"So it was you that laughed, Miss  
Margaret," said Carew. "It's a sin to  
waste such sweet sounds on the abbey  
ghosts. I protest I'll paint you as Me-  
dusa if you go on keeping tryst and  
making merry with the Furness ghosts  
while every-day mortals like Frank  
Carew can't get so much as a smile  
from you."

"I've known the Furness and its  
ghosts and legends ever since I was  
able to walk from our cottage to the  
ruins," said the girl, somewhat coldly.  
"Mr. Carew and I have only been ac-  
quaintances for a matter of three weeks  
past."

"The pleasantest week in Mr. Carew's  
life! I was thinking to have ended my  
stay here in another three weeks or so,  
but something the abbey specters whis-  
pered to me just before I intruded on  
you inclines me to make the three weeks  
three months. Will you be as hospita-  
ble as your friends the ghosts?"

"How hospitable?" will you join with  
them inviting me to remain?"

"Oh no."  
The negative was so disdainful, and  
the girl turned away with so abrupt a  
haughtiness that she was at the further  
end of the chapel before Carew had suf-  
ficiently recovered from his astonish-  
ment to stir tongue or foot. In the twi-  
light glowed for a single instant the ap-  
pearance of a dark-blue dress, a pale  
cheek, and certain dark curls falling  
with graceful decorum on the whitest of  
necks; then sunlight and the shadow in  
question faded away together, and with  
in and without, the ruins all was blank  
and gray.

Carew walked toward the sedilia and  
sat down where the departed apparition  
had, ten minutes earlier, been meditat-  
ing.

He sat for a few minutes thinking  
silently, a queer expression of mischief  
and perplexity working in eye and lip.  
That barbed little arrow of a "No" evi-  
dently rankled in his mind.

"Doesn't care for the society of mor-  
tals, I suppose. The girl has lived with  
ruins and legends till she is a sort of  
embodied dream herself. If I were Rip  
Van Winkle, or one of the Seven Sleep-  
ers, I might win a gracious word from  
her; but being an every-day piece of  
humanity her goddess-ship scorns me.  
Such a 'No' from a mouth of eigh-  
teen summers! I'll paint that face—  
I'll—"

"Mrs. Wolfe," said Carew to his lan-  
dlay, when the pair met next morning in  
the spacious garden attached to the cot-  
tage where he was staying, "I think  
your daughter has the strangest look I  
ever saw on any girl's face. Where on  
earth did she ever pick it up?"

"In Furness here, Mr. Carew. The  
lass has lived all her life but the first  
four years in this very house; and the  
old ruin is almost all the playmates she  
ever had. When Maggie was scarce  
high enough to climb into the abbot's  
seat she would sit by the hour under  
the stone dragons in the chapel; and  
now that she's three inches taller than  
her mother she goes there still. In the  
daytime, when we're both busy about  
the house, she's content with now and  
then taking a peep at the abbey from  
the window; but her first hour after  
rising and another before it's dark she  
spends at the altar-end of the chapel—  
dreaming of the jewels that are hidden  
there."

"Oh, it isn't the dead old abbots she  
dreams of, then! What may these jew-  
els be. Mrs. Wolfe?"

"A king's ransom in pearls and ru-  
bies, Mr. Carew. The story my grand-  
mother used to tell me forty years ago,  
and that I often told Maggie when she  
was a pairn just able to understand me,

says that in the wars of the Roses an  
abbot of Furness had a—but I'll leave  
the legend for Maggie to tell. It suits  
her tongue far better than mine, and  
she runs through it much more pretti-  
ly."

"I'd rather hear it from you," said  
Mr. Carew.

"And I'd rather my daughter told it.  
The child's so jealous already of the  
time you spend in the ruins that I'm  
sure, if she thought I'd been saying  
anything to you about the legend, she'd  
come to me, crying, 'Mother, get a new  
lodger. If Mr. Carew stays with us,  
he'll be trying to find the treasure.'"

"These are all the treasures I'm like-  
ly to find in the Abbey," said Carew,  
opening his portfolio of sketches. When  
his companion had passed a couple of  
minutes in inspection and admiration,  
he added: "Of course, Miss Wolfe does  
not put any real faith in this nonsense  
about abbots and rubies."

"Sometimes she does—sometimes not.  
I've known her to sit for an hour at a  
time in the abbot's seat there, trying  
to think where the casket could be hid-  
den, and then start up with a little laugh  
at herself and hurry away. It's thinking  
of her father and me that makes her  
take these wild fancies, Mr. Carew.  
Poor as you see my husband to-day, he  
kept a better stable ten years ago than  
Kennett does at his big house on the  
hill there; and if James Wolfe is now  
a ruined man, James Wolfe has him-  
self to thank for it. I'm free in talk-  
ing to you, sir, for there's little to hide  
from you after that scene the other  
evening. Oh, but Maggie's miserable  
about her father and me! I think she  
fears sometimes that he'll bring us on  
the parish before he's done; and the  
thought's like a continual burning to  
her. She wants to go and help in Miss  
Postlethwayte's school at Ulverstone;  
and glad Miss Postlethwayte would be  
to have her; for little as the child was  
when we took her from boarding there,  
she has learned almost all that the old  
lady could teach her. But I can't part  
with her—she's the only being on earth  
that can do anything with my husband  
—the only thing left me to be for, or  
that cares for me. And now, Mr. Ca-  
rew, I must run in—there's eight  
o'clock striking, and Maggie will be  
wondering why I don't come to help  
her in getting breakfast ready."

"I wonder what the girl thinks of  
me," was Carew's self-reproachful ejac-  
ulation, uttered within hearing of no  
creature but the rocks, as, after break-  
fast, the speaker walked down toward  
the Abbey. "What should a girl like  
this Margaret Wolfe, dividing her  
strange life between dreams of the  
past and the miseries of the present,  
know of the meaningless talk men in-  
dulge in toward girls whose society  
they find pleasant for the hour, but  
don't care to retain for life? I'll talk  
no more nonsense to this Diana of  
eighteen. After all," Carew halted, and  
looked back through the trees at the  
cottage he had left. "No, not a wife,"  
the painter muttered, walking on again.  
"I don't care to take a wife away with  
me from Furness. A picture's all I  
want."

Enter the chapel when he might, Ca-  
rew failed to find its shadowy desola-  
tion brightened by the presence of Mar-  
garet Wolfe; and he had received from  
London the canvas and other materials  
that he wrote for, and had spent a day  
or two in meditation over his projected  
picture before he again saw her in the  
Abbey ruins.

One afternoon, toward the end of  
June, Carew had walked across the  
fields to the ancient town of Dalton.  
King Henry VIII. was by this time  
hopelessly banished from the painter's  
thoughts; it was the fair form of Mar-  
garet that he contemplated placing in  
the abbot's seat.

He had already sketched, rapidly yet  
carefully, the sight on which his eyes  
had rested when, on that never-to-be  
forgotten evening of early June, he  
climbed to the window-gap of the an-  
cient chapel and looked toward the se-  
dilia. Contrasted alike vividly with  
the shadows that crept along broken  
tombstones and waving grass, and the  
sun-set that touched with flame all the  
sky above the ruins, the still figure of  
Margaret Wolfe leaned slightly forward

from the niche it occupied; her serious  
face and deep, dark eyes giving her the  
aspect of some ensainted phantom.  
With that face and those strangely  
beautiful eyes, as they appeared in the  
sketch that he had executed, Carew,  
however, remained dissatisfied. Labor  
as he might, his brush had failed to  
catch the expression that he had noted  
upon the girl's face—a something neith-  
er of earth nor heaven.

As in the sweet June twilight the  
painter walked back from Dalton to-  
ward the abbey ruins, his own face  
wore an expression curiously serious for  
one who was ordinarily among the  
lightest-hearted of living knights of the  
brush. There was a presence in the  
little Furness town that loaded the  
midsummer air with pestilence, and  
turned men's thoughts from business  
and pleasure to the terror and mystery  
of death. As quietly as the darkness  
that was entering with him, did Carew  
pass forward into the ruined chapel and  
toward the familiar niche. The face  
and form of Margaret Wolfe, absent  
from the place for a dozen evenings  
past, looked out once more on him from  
the sedilia, thoughtful and maidenly as  
ever.

While Carew still stood hesitating  
whether to go forward or withdraw,  
she ended his difficulty by rising and  
approaching him. "Good evening, Mr.  
Carew," was her salutation—offered  
coldly, but without any trace of the  
constraint that, since their former dia-  
logue in the ruins had made few and  
awkward the words exchanged by the  
embarrassed pair. "You have been to  
Dalton—have you not?"

"I have been there all the afternoon,"  
he replied. "And you had better not  
come near me."

"For fear of the fever, you mean!  
We have it in our house already. My  
father has been two or three times at  
Dalton lately, and to-day he finds him-  
self too ill to rise. If you think there  
is risk of infection in coming up to our  
house to fetch your things, I will put  
them together and send them to what-  
ever address you may give me."

"If I think there is risk of infec-  
tion!" returned Carew. "You had rea-  
son the other evening, Miss Margaret,  
for thinking me impertinent, but I don't  
know what cause I have given you to  
fancy me cowardly."

Neither moon nor star had as yet  
glimmered out on this June twilight.  
Through the half-darkness of the ruined  
chapel Carew perceived the girl's eyes  
bent on him with a look—he knew not  
whether of anger, wonder or pleasure—  
that made them shine starlike.

"Shall I be much in your way if I  
still stay here?" he asked. "I shall  
need very little attendance—most mat-  
ters I can manage for myself, and for  
dinner I can walk over, when necessary,  
to Dalton. Not much danger of my  
carrying the fever with me—it's all  
over the town already."

"Are you not afraid of taking it  
yourself, Mr. Carew? If you come  
back to our house to-night how do you  
know but it may be never to leave it  
again alive?"

"You evidently look upon me as a  
very nervous and fanciful kind of per-  
son," said Carew.

"If you were not fanciful would you  
be an artist? I don't think you are  
nervous, though; no one who was nerv-  
ous would seek the company of that ter-  
rible fever. But really, Mr. Carew,  
what good can you do by staying? It  
is very generous of you to wish it; but  
what use will it be?"

"Who will nurse your father through  
his illness?"

"My mother and myself, certainly."  
"And do you imagine you two wo-  
men will be sufficient? Have you any  
idea what, in a case like your father's,  
the delirium will be?"

"We can get help from Dalton."

"The fever will prevent you. In such  
weather as this, and in a town like  
Dalton, there is certain to be an out-  
burst of the disease that will drive  
everything into fright and confusion.  
Don't throw away a volunteer helper,  
Miss Wolfe; you may find it a difficult  
matter to replace me."

The girl hesitated. "And your  
sketching?" she said at last.